

Master's Program Applicant FAQs

- **How does the application process work?**

The application is entirely on-line. You will be asked to upload unofficial copies of your transcript as well as a statement of purpose, and a list of all the mathematics/statistics courses you've taken. You'll also be asked if you wish to be considered for a graduate teaching assistantship and for contact information for three people to provide a letter of reference. There is a fee (\$65 for Fall 2021 admission) for the application. If you are accepted, you will need arrange for an official copy of your transcript to be sent to NAU.
- **What information do I need for the application?**

The application will ask for 4 major pieces of information:

 - 1) A cover letter. This should address why you wish to pursue a MS degree at NAU and how this degree and education will advance your career.
 - 2) Your transcripts from your undergraduate degree(s).
 - 3) A copy of your resume/CV.
 - 4) Names of three people willing to write letters of reference. These should be people that can reliably speak to your ability to succeed in graduate school (thus a letter from an academic professor will have more weight than a letter from your next-door neighbor.) Reference letters are not required for the NAU application, but they may be solicited when we are ready to make decisions about Graduate Teaching Assistantships.

Your application should be in a form that can be electronically uploaded to NAU's graduate application website. Historically pdfs have been the most reliable document format to upload. Please make sure that they are legible in the electronic format!

- **What departmental funding is available?**

Most of the on-campus master's degree students are supported through Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) and nearly all GTAs have their assistantship renewed for the second year. For this funding, GTAs generally teach two sections of a course and are expected to spend about 20 hours a week doing that. Recently we have been able to fund approximately 30 GTAs each semester. GTAs receive a full tuition waiver, health insurance, and a stipend that is approximately \$15,000 per year. There are fees (about \$450 per semester) that the tuition waiver does not cover; exact amounts can be found here: <https://nau.edu/SDAS/Tuition-Fees/>
- **How do I request a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)?**

In the on-line application process, a question asks if you wish to be considered for a GTA. Just indicate yes. Nothing else is different for applicants requesting a GTA versus those not requesting a GTA. But note that to be considered for a GTA, your application must be submitted by March 15th.

- **What are the responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants?**

These are detailed on the department's Graduate Teaching Assistant Handbook at https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/146/2018/12/GTA_Handbook_2019-20.pdf

- **What is the GTA training and when does this take place?**

The training takes place over a 3-day period just prior to the beginning of the GTA's official contract period. Training is required of all incoming GTAs, for which they receive a small stipend.

- **Is a GRE required?**

No.

- **How does an advisor get assigned?**

The process of selecting an advisor happens after a student is accepted into the program and should occur before the student starts classes. We work hard to make sure any student that expresses a preference for a faculty member's advisement has their preference satisfied. If you have a particular person in mind, please let us know.

- **Could you look at my transcript and tell me if I should apply?**

Yes, but with some caveats. Without the full application, we can't get a full sense of your potential. So at best we would look at the transcript and either tell you about deficiencies or note that you seem to meet the minimum requirements and encourage you to submit a full application.

- **When does the department make application decisions?**

We make application decisions throughout the year (October 1-August 1) and your application will be considered upon submission.

- **When does the department make GTA awards?**

We decide on GTA awards once a year on or after March 15th. As a result, an applicant for Fall semester might be admitted in December or January but not know about their funding status until March. An applicant that applies in May or June (again for the Fall semester) will likely not even be considered for a GTA.

- **Can I apply for scholarships?**

At the departmental level, there is one scholarship available for incoming students and we assume everybody is interested in it and we utilize your application information for it.

At the university level, there are several available scholarships. Further information can be found here: <http://nau.edu/GradCol/Financing/Scholarships-Fellowships/>

- **Can I start the program during Spring semester?**

For the MS in Statistics and MS in Mathematics, we generally recommend against starting during the spring semester because we have a number of required 2 semester course-sequences that

are offered Fall/Spring. These sequences make it difficult or impossible for a spring starting student to graduate in four semesters. Furthermore, GTA offers are made for students starting in the Fall, so students starting in the spring would be not be funded. For the MS in Mathematics Education, there are no mandatory course sequences and students may start whenever is convenient.

- **Can I defer my enrollment for a year?**

No, you will need to apply again.

- **What are the research interests of the faculty?**

Please visit <https://in.nau.edu/math/faculty-research/> to see details on each faculty member,

International Students Specific:

- **Are international students eligible for teaching assistantships?**

For the Master's programs in Mathematics and Statistics, the answer is yes. We give no special preference for national vs international students in determining GTA awards. However, US visa requirements do not allow us to award teaching assistantships for the on-line Master's in Mathematics Education program.

- **Why do I need additional financial support? How much do I have to show?**

The US government requires that international students prove that they have enough funding to support themselves while they are here. While a GTA provides much of this, the US government requires students to have a bit more support. So in addition to the GTA funding, you will have to be able to show a more financial resources than just the GTA when you apply for the Student Visa. The rules change year-to-year and students work with NAU's Center for International Education for the Student Visa and what resources they are required to have available.

- **Do I need to take the TOEFL?**

The TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo may be waived if you are a native speaker of English. Applicants who completed a high school or university education at an institution where the language of primary instruction is English are considered to be native speakers. See <https://nau.edu/cie/education-abroad/programs/english-speaking-countries/> (Please note that applicants in this category may be asked to provide documentation to verify this information). Also notice that this requirement is satisfied if you have earned a bachelor's degree (or higher) from a U.S. university or college. <http://nau.edu/GradCol/Admissions/International/Program-in-Intensive-English/>

MS Mathematics Education Specific

- **Is the program entirely on-line?**

All of the coursework is on-line, but there is a final oral presentation that is best taken face-to-face. But could be taken over, for example, Zoom.

- **As a non-degree seeking student, may I take Math Education graduate courses?**

Yes. However because the prerequisites for the courses require either admission to the MS Math Ed program (or the Math Ed Certificate program), you must acquire instructor consent before registering. Contact whomever is teaching the course and describe your situation and ask for a permission number to be allowed to enroll.

- **Are there deadlines to be admitted in time to start in a given semester?**

Students planning to start in a Spring semester need to apply before December 1st, those planning to start in the Summer need to apply by May 1st, and those planning to start in the Fall need to apply by July 31st.

Certificate in Applied Statistics Specific:

- **Do I have to apply before taking any of the coursework?**

Because STA 570 and 571 have no checked prerequisite coursework, just about any student may enroll in these courses. Once students have been successful in these courses they may then complete the application for admittance to the certificate program. There is nothing beneficial about applying earlier or later in the course progression and many students apply to the program and apply to graduate in the same semester. Any of the Statistics faculty would be happy to advise you in appropriate coursework and the department's Graduate Coordinator (mathgrad@nau.edu) will help.